

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**

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SUSPENSE

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Remarks

STAT

Executive Secretary

14 JUL 88

Date

3637 (10-81)

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

July 14, 1988

STAT

Mr. Arnold Beichman

Dear Arnold:

I just read your piece in The Washington Times of 13 July. I think you may be one of only a handful of people in the world who picked up on Zagladin's comments on the Soviet approach to warfighting and the winnability of nuclear conflict. As [redacted] said to me, it is nice after all these years for those of us who were in the minority to have had such clear confirmation of our views.

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There is nothing in this letter for use in your writings; just a kudo for your sharp eye.

I am headed to the Olympic Peninsula next week to do some backpacking and make contact with the real world. Enjoy B.C.!

Regards,

STAT

Robert M. Gates

PS: You made life a bit uncomfortable for me when you explicitly put me in opposition to the President in your column.

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DDCI/RMGates/de [redacted]

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P-305-IR

**ARNOLD BEICHMAN**

# The Zagladin revelations

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
 The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Washington Times **F-3** \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
 JSA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **13 July '88**

**M**any startling revelations about the squalid Soviet past have surfaced since Mikhail Gorbachev's "glasnost" ("glasnost" + "perestroika") became a fact of Soviet life. None has been as striking and as disquieting as a public statement by a high Soviet official, Vadim V. Zagladin, at a press conference in Moscow June 25. I want to quote it word for word as it appeared in the Los Angeles Times the next day under the byline of Michael Parks:

"While we rejected nuclear war and struggled to prevent it, we nevertheless based our policy on the possibility of winning one." (emphasis added).

This admission by the deputy head of the international department of the Communist Party's Central Committee is riveting because it confirms a finding by Professor Richard Pipes published in Commentary Magazine in July 1977 — 11 years ago! — under the unambiguous title, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight & Win a Nuclear War." It took only 11 years for this confession finally to emerge from the lips of a Soviet spokesman.

The article by a leading Harvard historian and analyst of Soviet affairs created a sensation at the time because it flew in the face of the belief widely held by liberals in and out of Congress, the media, the scientific academy and the CIA, plus not so surprisingly, Henry Kissinger, that the MAD (mutually assured destruction) Doctrine had been accepted by both sides. Therefore, it was claimed, (1) a "first strike" Soviet Union nuclear attack on the United States was precluded and nuclear superiority was meaningless and (2) the Soviet strategic buildup was no menace to American national security.

On the contrary, said Mr. Pipes, the Soviet Union in no way shares the MAD Doctrine. Mr. Kissinger, however, was arguing that, "The traditional mode of military analysis which saw in war a continuation of politics but with its own appropriate means is no longer applicable." As

Mr. Pipes wrote, Mr. Kissinger "can always be counted upon to utter commonplaces in the tone of prophetic revelation." Not until the Reagan administration came to power (and Mr. Pipes became a staff member of the National Security Council) was MAD dismissed as an article of U.S. strategic faith.

The Pipes article repudiated the conventional wisdom, held so tenaciously, which minimized the Soviet strategic threat. He quoted Soviet journals in which military spokesmen were arguing that it was erroneous to claim that there would be no victor in a thermonuclear world war. While Soviet military thinking was patently concentrated on how to win a war, U.S. strategic thinking was concentrated on arms control.

The reason for the attack on Mr. Pipes was that he was apprehensive about the quasi-unilateral disarmament of the United States in the mid-1960s. Believing in MAD, the United States froze its ICBMs at 1,054 and dismantled nearly all its defenses against enemy bombers. Meanwhile the Soviet Union deployed 11 new strategic systems in the 1970s as against just one by the United States.

In the summer of 1976, the Harvard historian had been appointed by President Ford chairman of what was called "Team B," established at the recommendation of the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, to prepare an alternative estimate of Soviet strategic objectives to the estimate prepared by the CIA. Team B's subsequent report was a devastating refutation of MAD, the CIA analysis of the Soviet arms buildup and of the scientific community's political beliefs in "deterrence-through-agreement" as against Edward Teller's advocacy of deterrence through strength. Team B concluded that the Soviet Union was developing a first-strike capability which could only mean that the Soviet Union thought it could fight and win a nuclear war.

The attacks on Mr. Pipes and Team B came fast and furious from

Democratic Sens. Gary Hart of Colorado and William Proxmire of Wisconsin, from a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report prepared under the egregious William G. Miller, its then staff director, from the Harvard chemist, George Kristiakowsky, and, inevitably, from The New York Times and The Washington Post editorial pages. Sens. Malcolm Wallop, Wyoming Republican, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, New York Democrat, stood with Mr. Pipes and Team B. All of this Mr. Pipes reported in another Commentary article, October 1986, commemorating the 10th anniversary of Team B's report which President Reagan adopted after his inauguration in 1981.

And now at long last comes the vindication of Mr. Pipes by Vadim V. Zagladin. Sweet though that vindication may be, disquieting questions, despite the Zagladin deposition, still remain:

Has the Soviet Union given up the idea of strategic superiority? Does the Soviet Politburo still think its military forces could fight and win a nuclear war? Please put the answers in writing and a guarantee of on-sight inspection.

Arnold Beichman, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, is a Washington Times columnist.